

# You Never Know What Will Happen At a Porch Party

It being such a fine day, I just thought I'd run over to Aunt Sairy's and spend the day, and I do declare I never did see such a place for company of a Sunday. In the first place Sairy's got such a fine porch and the house being right on the car line, it's an awful temptation for folks to run in all day long of a Sunday.

It was perfectly all right until just before dinner time and then it did seem as though everyone in town knew what time Sairy had planned to have dinner, and that she was going to have something particularly nice, although none of 'em seemed to take into consideration that being a hot day, she might not have provided enough for the whole town. Although to do them all justice they each one seemed to think they would be the only ones there.

But manage she did, although I don't know how, but I always did say that Aunt Sairy was a heap better manager than anyone else in the family, and somehow we got through that meal and everybody seemed to have enough, all except Uncle Fred and Aunt Sairy. I noticed they seemed to go kinder light on the helpings.

Well, anyway, we got through, and the women folks stayed and helped Sairy to clean off the dishes and put the food away, although she insisted she'd just as soon let the dishes go, being as how it was such a hot day and everything.

Anyway, we finally got back on the porch and the dinner crowd seemed to have disappeared kinda fast after having eaten Aunt Sairy out of house and home and we were setting quite comfortable talking about old times for quite a little spell when who should drop in but Aunt Josie Mason, all done up in embroidered linen and a bright green parasol she had made herself, the dress, I mean, of course, but why a woman of Aunt Josie's age should get herself up in that fashion and neglect everything else to embroider little dudads all over a piece of linen that would look better plain is more than I can see.

Aunt Josie has always enjoyed awful poor health, so I suppose that gives her an excuse for setting around embroidering when she might be doing something better such as doing up a few berries or making some preserves to help tide over the winter. Well, Josie had no sooner sat down and puffed about the heat and the car being so crowded and some brute of a man walking all over her clean, white shoes, although maybe he wasn't so much to blame as the car company for having the car so crowded all the time, and she'd probably sue the company or make trouble somehow, although Aunt Sairy said it would be less trouble if she went home and cleaned her shoes over again.

Well, anyway, as I was saying, she'd no sooner sat down than she began to run on about her system being all out of order and Aunt Sairy said something under her breath which sounded like: What, again!—although I couldn't be sure.

Aunt Josie was real happy years ago until she discovered by some doctor telling her so, that she had a system and since then she's acquired more intimate knowledge about her own insides than the doctor himself, and she knows all the things she's had by their first name and discusses them like she was a clinician's assistant, and don't think anything about it.

Well, as I was saying, Josie's insides are always out of gear, and she's always threatened with almost fatal things and all her operations have been performed just in the nick of time—and she would always certainly have been dead in a week if the doctor hadn't intervened just when he did. Of course, we all know that if Aunt Josie had ever had half the things she's been credited with, she would have been dead long ago for no one set of organs could stand having all those Latin names hurled at them. But Josie's kind of queer that way and she sets great store by having had more operations than any other woman in the neighborhood and her husband never could refuse her anything, anyway. Well, right in the middle of it, we saw Missus Drew, that Aunt Sairy met at the whist club, coming up the walk and, after we had made her and Aunt Josie acquainted, Aunt Sairy and I went inside to do up the mess of dishes that was left from dinner, Sairy explaining that she hadn't wanted that horde of women putting around her kitchen and cluttering more than they cleared up.

Aunt Sairy wasn't feeling any too good natured being as how she had had a little spat with Uncle Fred, she having warned him not to go off and leave her with all the company on her hands and he having gone out the side door the first chance he got and hadn't been seen since and then too her little girl Doris being somewhat of a trial on Sundays being as how Sairy thinks it isn't Christian to let a child play much of a Sunday and her keeping Doris sitting all day in her best starched dress and Doris fretting something awful under the strain of having to sit still and keep clean. For he it from me to dictate about other people's children but if I'd ever been unfortunate enough to marry and have children, I think I wouldn't try to impress them with Sunday at too early an age.

By the time we got back onto the porch Mrs. Jones from down on the other street and her son George had come and I was right sorry for George being as how his mother totes him around with her every chance she gets when it's as plain as the nose on your face that George isn't the model young son his mother wants him to pretend to be and doesn't enjoy the reputation she gives him one bit.

Down on the bottom step was Sairy's elder girl, Helen, with Harold, the boy she goes to the moving pictures with. Helen's so intense especially on the subject of Harold that I feel kinda worried about her, having been a young girl myself once and knowing something about the way these Harolds act, although this one may be different from the one that caused me so many tears and sorrow.

Anyway it was late in the evening when everyone had gone but Cousin Lynn and she stayed and stayed and of course Sairy couldn't ask him to supper being as how everything had all been eaten up at dinner time and as I got ready to go Aunt Sairy said something about guessing she'd board up the porch before next Sunday and make folks think she had gone away for the summer. Of course she must have meant that for Cousin Lynn.



(IT IS A QUARTER OF SEVEN, AND COUSIN LYNN, WHO CAME IN AT FOUR, IS STAYING BRAVELY ON. THE PANTOMIME IN THE BACKGROUND MEANS: "DON'T-ASK-HIM-TO-SUPPER.")



"NOW, FRED, DON'T YOU GO AND LEAVE ME TO ENTERTAIN THEM ALONE!"



VERY WARM AND MOIST LADY CALLER, WHO IS STICKING TO THE POINT ON THE ROCKER, AND LISTENING SOMEWHAT DISTRACTEDLY TO AUNT JOSIE'S ACCOUNT OF HER SYSTEM, BEING ALL RUN DOWN.

## AMONG US MORTALS

SUNDAY  
AFTERNOON  
ON THE  
PORCH.



THE MISSES HOGATE, WHO SEE EVERYTHING THAT GOES ON, AND MORE TOO, FROM BEHIND THE VINES.



"C'MON OVER, BERTHA—I WANNA TELL YOU SOMETHIN'!"



ON THE BOTTOM STEP. "YES, YOU DID -- YOU LOOKED STRAIGHT AT ME, STEWART, AND YOU NEVER SPOKE."



GEORGE, GOING ON SEVENTEEN, AND TRYING AWFULLY HARD TO GET BY AS A MAN-ABOUT-TOWN, HEARS HIS MOTHER START THE ANECDOTE ABOUT HOW CUNNING HE LOOKED IN HIS LITTLE NIGHTIE WHEN, AT THE AGE OF THREE, HE LISPED: "NANA, CAN THE ANGELTH LOOK DOWN AND THEE, IF I THROW THEM A KITH?"